

Volume 27

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Number 4

# BULLETIN *of the*

## *Sydney*

## *University*

## *Speleological*



## *Society*



# **SUSS's 40th BIRTHDAY** **CELEBRATIONS!!!**

*Its our Answer to the Bicentennial!!!*

**Celebrate in 88 in the Luxury of Caves House Jenolan!  
(Cabin or Camping if you prefer).**

27-29 MAY 1988.

Festivities will include a dinner, speakers, a band  
and lots of caving!!!!

Thrill to the tales of caving past and present.

Meet the people that made the club SUSS.

Bring your loved ones, your old overalls, your dinner  
jacket and most of all bring all those  
old members out of hiding.

**For more Info contact Mark Pollinger 5196046 (evenings).**

# Australian Speleological Federation

Incorporated in the Australian Capital Territory

IT SEEMS THAT EVERY BEAUROCRATIC MUSCLE IN QUEENSLAND IS STRAINING TO HELP CHEW UP MT ETNA. The latest news is that Queensland Officials have refused the Central Queensland Speleological Society's permit to run an art union to raise funds. However, the Australian Speleological Federation's Conservation Commission has come to the rescue, and is running a raffle under New South Wales law. The money raised will go into the ASF's Mt Etna Fighting Fund. No matter where you live in Australia, you may offer to buy tickets in the raffle, and your offer may be accepted in NSW (this fixes the point of the raffle contract in NSW rather than in the state of the offeror).

TICKETS COST \$2 EACH OR \$15 FOR A BOOK OF TEN.

If you wish to help the fight to save Mt Etna, please offer to buy some tickets in the raffle. Your offers should be sent to:

Mr Patrick Larkin  
Co-Convenor, Conservation Commission,  
Australian Speleological Federation,  
C/ Box 35, Holme Building,  
UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY NSW 2006.

FIRST PRIZE IS GOODS VALUED AT \$300.00 PROVIDED BY WILDSHORTS (formerly Caving Equipment). SECOND PRIZE is goods valued at \$200 and THIRD PRIZE is goods valued at \$100.00 also from Wildsports.

PLEASE HELP SAVE MT ETNA!

Yours faithfully,



Patrick Larkin  
Co-Convenor.

PS: LATEST NEWS - Mike Ahern, the new Premier of Queensland, will visit Mt Etna with his new Parliamentary environment committee, and meet with cavers' representatives, in January.

## EDITORIAL

Our President, Keir Vaughan Taylor was the editor of issue 27(3) of the bulletin and his editorial provoked a response from Derik Hobbs which is reproduced below. As Keir is currently braving the caves of Mexico, he is unable to answer the letter, so I shall make a few comments that may explain Keirs position. I believe that Keirs editorial was mainly drawing attention to the great relations that exist between the Guides and Cavers at Jenolan. While Derik has indeed picked Keir up on several fauxpas, I believe that these do not detract from Keirs case.

Additionally is is unfair to criticise Keir for low profile political involvement. His editorial itself is evidence of Keirs concern and action. Not all concerned speleos wish to contribute through committees etc. and Keir has been active in alternate ways. He is one of the few speleos still actively campaigning to stop the mining at Bungonia, he has contributed greatly to activities such as the Mount Anne expedition and Speleo Sports 86. I hope that Deriks implication that Keir is simply a caver interested in "wearing out" the cave resource through recreational caving, is rhetoric and not a misguided opinion.

Finally a point that both Keir and Derik have missed is that in many cases, caving for recreation is far less damaging than cave exploration and research. We must remember that Bungonia is not the only area that is visited for recreational caving and should not be used as the only example of the results of such caving.

Greg Wilkins

To The Editor  
SUSS Bull 27(4)

Dear Greg,

I read with interest Keir Vaughan Taylor's Editorial in SUSS Bull 27(3). Whilst I agree with many of Keir's points, I feel that some of the matters raised by Keir deserve comment (the numbers correspond to the paragraphs of Keir's Editorial):

5. I have three disagreements with Keir's fifth paragraph. First, only an extreme minority of people believe the best policy for caves is "to keep everyone out of them". Second, I am not aware of any caves in New South Wales that have been "closed for regeneration" and I challenge Keir to provide details of such an instance. Third, I strongly believe that caving for pleasure or sport is not a sufficient justification for "wearing out" the cave resource: I believe that sport caving should be carried out in a manner consistent with the long-term preservation of the caves. In response to Keir's fifth paragraph generally, I ask whether Keir would still be a caver if all cave areas had been "worne out" by "caving for pleasure or sport" like Bungonia.

7. Speleo Politicians only do to caving clubs what the caving clubs allow them to do. The speleo politicians are, as Keir has pointed out, the clubs' "representatives", and it is up to the clubs to give them directions as to the clubs' views and interests.

9. I agree with the sentiment of Keir's ninth paragraph (which advocates input by cavers into the management process). However, I note that Keir's past involvement in such matters has been rather low profile.

Yours faithfully,  
Derek Hobbs.

SUSS BULL 27(4) : 1

## **NOTICEBOARD**

### **MEXICO**

Al Warild's third Australian Expedition to Chilchotla, Mexico begins in late November. Last time, Al and team found six vertical kilometres of new cave, and got to -940 metres in one cave. The Society's best wishes go with the whole team, let's hope they wallop the -1000 metres mark! SUSS will be represented on the trip by El Presedentee Keir Vaughn-Taylor, Phil Cole, Anne Grey and Rolf Adams, Ross Bannerman, Richard and Judy McNeall.

### **JENOLAN**

In June, the Tourism Commission agreed a new set of access guidelines for Jenolan Caves, which allowed limited access to caves which had been closed to speleos. Under the new system, SUSS members visited Chevalier Extension and Baralong Cave in August. A trip report, with photos, will appear in a future SUSS Bull. For those of you who haven't seen photos of these magnificent caves, don't miss Robert Brand's 3-dimensional slide show which will take place at the March meeting next year.

### **OBERON COUNCIL**

Elsewhere on the Jenolan scene, Oberon Shire Council appears to have been guilty of some injudicious decision making. First, the Council has begun widening and deepening the Kanangra Walls Road over its length in Oberon Shire, to supply the Council's gravel needs. The road has begun to look like a long thin quarry and the extractive works have taken place beyond the road reserve inside both the Jenolan Caves Reserve and the Kanangra Boyd National Park. Second, Council consented for the construction of a debarker, (a timber works) at the top of the two mile hill but within the Jenolan catchment. A temporary debarker has been constructed and the applicant company has plans to construct a much larger timber works. Jenolan Caves management has been angered by the decisions, whilst the DEP and Crown Lands Department have raised questions about the legality of Council's decisions.

### **JENOLAN MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The Jenolan Caves Plan of Management team are busily writing, observing and colating. It will be very important for caver's views to be heard and taken into account in the Plan of Management - after all, we have to live with it for the next 20 years.

### **CAVE DIVING**

A Cave Diving sub group of SUSS has been formed under the guidance of Simon and Judy Mc Cartney.

## **Council guilty of environmental degradation, says Jenolan Manager**

Manager of the Jenolan Caves Resort, Malcolm Bryon says he is very disheartened over the state of the Council excavated gravel quarry on the Kanangra Walls Road.

Mr Bryon was addressing Monday's meeting of Oberon Shire Council. He said that while he wasn't at the meeting to chastise Council, the fact remained that what was happening at the quarry was nothing short of environmental degradation and no one else would be able to get away with what Council had done in a State Nature Reserve.

Runoff from the area jeopardized the cave area and according to Mr Bryon there were cave depressions called dough lines only a short distance from the excavated site.

"I realise the Council has a problem on its hands as far as an alternate gravel supply is concerned but the protection of the reserve is more important than the short term gain", said Mr Bryon.

"With a ten year reserve at the site, imagine, what the area would look like if quarrying was allowed to continued."

Shire Engineer Bob Hooper said the closest alternate site of a similar quality material was on the Mozart Road near the Goulburn Road.

"The maintenance of the roads in the Jenolan Caves Reserve is financed by the D.M.R. and the extra travelling distance involved will mean the work done on those roads will increase costs, thereby resulting in less maintenance," said Mr Hooper.

In answer to a question, Mr Bryon said some restoration may be possible with tree planting. Mr Hooper said the N.P.W.S. had indicated that part of the area could be used to provide an information bay.

The Oberon Review 19/09/87



The divers will be tested to above CAT3 advanced standard. The name for the group is SUREG (Speleological Underwater Research and Exploration Group), pronounced SURG not sewerage. The group is only open to experienced cavers with good diving experience, who have shown a real interest in putting hard work into speleo exploration and research. See trip reports in recent and future bulls for details of the groups activities.

#### **BARRALONG DIVERS EXTENSION!!!**

The upstream sump of Barralong cave Jenolan has been successfully dived with the discovery of dry passage and a second sump that extend the cave by at least 300m. The 1st sump is 80m long, 13m deep and surfaces into 30m of passage with no obvious dry leads. There are several duck unders before the stream sumps again. The second sump is 10m long and fairly tight, but leads to more dry stream passage and a excellent lead up from the stream way. Neither of these has yet to be explored as the divers were already overdue. This extension is extremely promising as it has 6 km of the southern Limestone in which to develop. The Divers were Ron Allum (convenor of the ASF commission of cave diving, and a founding member of CDAA) and Simon McCartney.

#### **JENOLAN SURVEY**

Julia James' Jenolan Show Cave Survey is blazing onwards, with the total surveyed length now at 8 kilometres. Work has not yet begun on the Southern side of the Grand Arch. It seems that Exit Cave may be about to lose its "longest cave in the nation" title. Let's keep our fingers crossed.

#### **CHRISTMAS ISLAND**

Rauleigh Webb's Christmas Island Expedition returned at the end of August, after discovering many kilometres of new cave passage, including a 500 metre long chamber. SUSS was represented by Guy Cox and Derek Hobbs, who will be showing slides of the expedition at the February meeting.

#### **ASF FEES**

At the January ASF Council Meeting, SUSS will be proposing a new system for raising finance from caving clubs to replace the present capitation fee system. The proposed system consists of sliding rate which falls from \$14/member (for a 10 member club) exponentially to \$8/member. The system is designed to halt the fall in ASF memberships by providing incentives to the clubs to grow or provide ASF with extra subscriptions.

#### **SPELEO SPORTS**

CONGRATULATIONS to Hills Speleology Club for their victory at Speleosports held at Macquarie University on 24th October, 1987. Not that the SUSS team went down without a fight. Steve Keenlyside, Anne Gray, Danielle Gemenis and Pat Larkin completed the well-designed course in 10 minutes 36 seconds - some 3/4 minute quicker than their nearest rivals. Alas! They ran foul of the substantial time penalties allocated to the beer-can crawl event. CONGRATULATIONS also to Mark Bonwick, who won the "Supercaver" individual event.

#### **TUGLOW**

SUSS' Tuglow survey has gone very well under the leadership of Martin Scott and Keir Vaughan-Taylor, with hordes of surveyors descending on the cave in early October. However, the project is not finished, and volunteers are needed for the next trip (see Club Calender).

#### **MOUNT ANNE ARTICLE**

AUSTRALIAN GEOGRAPHIC has settled on the final draft and photo selection for our caving article which will be entitled "Inside Mount Anne" and will appear in Issue 10, April 1988. Issue 10 will also contain short articles on Al Warild's solo caving exploits (by Julia James), caving on the Nullabor (by Neil Montgomery) and the Bats and the mining threat to Mt Etna (by Sue Hand). A bumper caving issue! However, members wishing to obtain a copy of this collector's item should plan in advance - from next year, Australian Geographic will not be available from Newsagents - it will be subscription only.

## OBITUARY

Norbert Caseret the famous French caver, author of numerous texts, inventor of scaling poles, the father of European Caving, died recently. Caseret inspired many cavers and is commemorated by the naming of a cave at Jenolan, J51, Caseret Cave.

## MOUNT ETNA

MT. ETNA is rapidly becoming a conservation issue of national significance. Senator Graham Richardson, Federal Minister for the Environment, will visit the mountain after the current session of Parliament. The Sydney Morning Herald and the Melbourne Age have run a story in "The Good Weekend" complete with colour photos of the damage caused by mining. Australian Geographic Issue 10 will contain an article by Sue Hand on the bats and the mining and Geoff Spanner of the Wilderness Society has penned an article for Geo which will also appear in the near future. In Queensland, scarcely a day goes by without some press coverage of the issue. Hopefully the Queensland Government will come to its senses, or lose office, in time to stop the vandalism.

The Following letter was received from the Central Queensland Speleological Society.

CENTRAL QUEENSLAND SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY INC.  
MEMBER OF AUSTRALIAN SPELEOLOGICAL FEDERATION INC.

16th October 1987

PO Box 538  
Rockhampton QLD 4700.

Dear Fellow Caver,

Our Society is at present fighting to save Mt. Etna and its 46 caves from destruction by Limestone Quarrying.

Over the last few months and until January 1988, we expect this to become the major Conservation issue in Queensland. We have had Dr. Bob Brown inspect the caves recently, and expect over 20 politicians to view the emergence flight at Bat Cleft over Christmas. Senator Graham Richardson is expected to view this spectacle.

In order to fight this issue, we would like to encourage more ASF members to become involved. To do this, we wish to extend an invitation to all members to visit our area. We can offer some accommodation with members and the club's camping facilities during your stay. Guides will also be available. As well as our caves, which are 15 minutes from the centre of Rockhampton, we have Keppel Island just off the coast. Sailing and diving trips can be arranged as well.

These preliminary parties to see the caves should encourage more field trips on the way to TROPICON. Please notify us by phone (079) 342788 before arriving so that we can arrange keys etc.

CRAIG HARDY  
Conservation SEC. CQSS Inc.



## **JENOLAN**

**Present:** Simon and Judy Mc Cartney, Keir Vaughan Taylor, Greg Wilkins.

**Special Guest appearance:** Kevin Keirnen

**Short but exciting appearance :** Steve Keenlyside, Derrrie.

**No appearance what so ever :** John Kay.

It all started rather catastrophically really, no one would have believed the weekend could have turned out so well. Firstly it was raining, normally not so bad, but potentially disastrous as the aim of the weekend was to pump dry the puddle in Water Cavern (Jubilee). Secondly, Steve decided to wrap his car around the car of an innocent bystander. Well I guess somebody has to do it now that Mike Lake doesn't come on trips all that often. Finally there was a caver with a broken leg stuck in Great North Cavern (Mammoth). So things were not looking all that rosy.

Not the type to be deterred easily, we left Steve to complete the job of dismantling his car, and set about preparing to pump water cavern. In the northern parts of Jubilee cave, a large passage way (showing evidence of significant water flow) ends in Water Cavern, so named for the puddle at the end. The story goes that during a large drought many years ago, the puddle dried up and a significant wind blew through the Cavern. People have dug in the mud at low water levels and some pumping has been attempted before, however we believed that one or two more efforts could be worth while before shelving the prospects in the puddle.

We arrived at Jenolan equipped with a pool pump and a transformer to provide 240V from the 110V tourist lighting system. The pipe for pumping through was hidden under moderate amounts of dirt and stinging nettles near Mammoth Flat (it had been previously used for filling a water tank on the flat and the Guides consented to let us use it). Saturday morning was spent playing in the rain and nettles recovering some 180m of this 25mm PVC piping.

Due to the number of tourists in Jubilee on the Saturday afternoon, it was decided to leave the pumping until Sunday. A cave diving trip to Rubble Trubble and Tunnel Web, past sump 4 of the Imperial streamway was planned instead. The reason for the visit was twofold. Firstly, previous surveys of Rubble Trouble had been in error due to water logged survey gear and secondly there was the possibility of a caver equipped with a hammer to discover new cave and a hopeful spider cave connection.

Simon, Judy, Keir and Greg were joined on the dive by Kevin, a speleo hydrology expert who was responsible for turning the blue lake green, with his dye tracing efforts earlier in the week. The survey equipment was to have been protected by a water proof camera bag during the dives through sumps 1, 2, 3 and 4. However, as we were just getting wet, we discovered that the survey gear had been left out of the camera bag, which only contained food and film. This in fact turned out to be very fortunate as Keir lost the camera bag on his way through sump 1.

The trip along the Imperial streamway was as pleasant as usual. The water level had not risen significantly from the rain. Once past sump4, it was out of our wet suits and into overalls. With no survey equipment, we went straight into exploratory mode. Simon began hammering at one lead in Tunnel Web while Greg and Keir searched for and tested some more possibilities. Tunnel Web is a area of horizontal "phreatic" passage developed on several levels, with probable but impassable connections between levels.

Keir and Greg found little promise in existing leads and were unsuccessful in finding any further ones. Simon broke through into a 8m fissure like chamber, but it did not go any further although a moderate draft can be felt. After reviewing the work done to date in this area, it is the group opinion that further progress towards spider cave can only be expected after accurate RDF points indicate the most promising direction.

To make up for the loss of the Camera Bag, Keir recovered a knife that had been left (read lost) on a previous trip to Tunnelweb. Unfortunately, his luck did not stay changed and sump 1 took its second victim for the day. On the journey out, the sump relieved Keir of the knife (it was probably having trouble opening the camera bage and thought the knife might help).

Cave 2 , Divers 0.

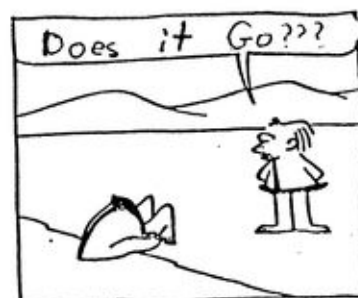
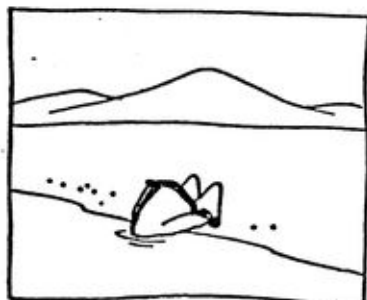
The sun came out on Sunday, and we felt sure our luck had changed. With new found enthusiasm, we hefted the pump, pipe and power source along the tourist track to Water Cavern. The setup looked very impressive, and it sure sounded impressive, but the only water that moved was the water that we carried about trying to prime the pump. It was finally decided that the pump was inappropriate, so the pipe was left there for a syphoning (or maybe pumping) attempt in late November.

Simon and Kevin, then visited Sump 6 via the dry route in order to place Charcoal bags that may detect the flurosciene released by Kevin. Judy and Keir dived sump 1 again in search of lost treasure. They were successful on the way in, finding both the knife and the camera bag. However, Keir emerged from the sump carrying the dive knife and only the dive knife. After leaving the knife firmly in the hands of Greg, Keir dived back again and recovered the bag. This almost finished all the caving for the weekend, except that Keir had to pop back into Imperial to retrieve the dive torch that he had left behind during the excitement of the camera bag recovery!

Cave 0 , Cavers 0.

So the results of the weekend were that we had found nothing, lost nothing, moved a few things about (including the front end of Steves car), and had a great time (We didn't ask Steve). The SUSS Diving group (SUREG) now has three areas of interest in the Imperial/Jubilee system: pushing Tunnelweb but only after some more survey work, pumping Water Cavern, and the underwater dig in sump 7 and leads in sump 6 found by Simon several months ago. [ED. and now a new underwater lead in Barralong]

Greg Wilkins.



## MOLE CREEK, TASMANIA

Present: Phil Cole (T.L.), Mark Hunter, Pat Larkin, Derek Hobbs, Jim Blyd  
6 - 8 June, 1987

THE TELEPHONE RANG and it was Phil. "How are your finances, Pat?" What a question to lead with! But then, Phil's not noted for subtlety. "Intact", I said, trying to be non committal. But it wasn't long before Phil talked me into a little caving splurge.

Mole Creek, about 60 kilometres by road from Launceston airport, is one of Australia's premier karst regions. It is home to caves of extraordinary natural beauty - caves which are truly of international significance. (Note: An article on the Management of Kubla Khan may appear in a future SUSS Bull.)

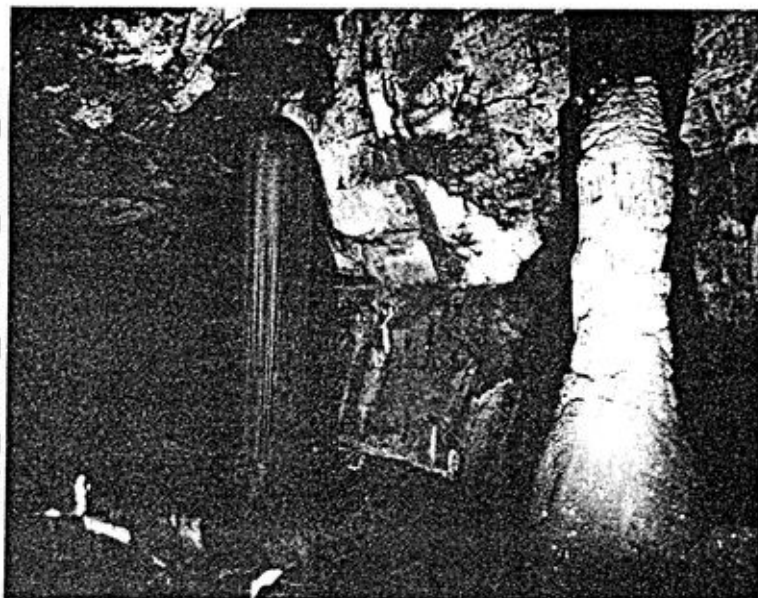
### GENGHIS KHAN (Saturday, 6 June)

The first cave we visited was Genghis Khan (MC 38), but not without a problem to start. We stood before the entrance to Genghis Khan, which Phil recognised instantly. "That's the entrance to Kubla!" So, I fumbled with the Kubla key. It just would not fit into the lock. Then, I goofed. I dropped the key and it fell down the five metre entrance climb, well beyond reach. Before we realised the mistake, "Mother" (Mark) was on his way back to the NPSW Office to ask for another key. After this little bit of confusion (which cost about an hour), we used the other key to unlock the gate, and entered Genghis Khan.

Genghis Khan is a relatively small cave by Tasmanian standards. By NSW standards it is large: It is about 300 metres long and some 70 metres deep. The entrance is about one metre across followed by a five metre climb down to a fissure which gives access to the main passage. The main passage is about 20 metres wide and 15 metres high. It descends at about 15 Degrees to the bottom of the cave. The cave is adorned with straws up to 3 metres long, golden flowstones and a fine stalagmite/stalactite display at the bottom. But the highlight of Genghis is its aragonite. About one third of the way down the main passage on the left side is a gap between bedding planes 150 centimetres high, 30 metres wide and 50 metres long. The upper face is covered with amazing aragonite displays ranging up to 40 centimetres across. Perhaps the most striking aspect of these displays is their colours - some are Orange!

### KUBLA KHAN (see maps pp 12-14)

Just a few hundred metres from the entrance to Genghis is the upper entrance of its big brother, Kubla. The upper entrance (MC 29) is slightly smaller than the Genghis entrance and leads to a horizontal four metre long crawl to a flowstone constriction. Beyond the constriction is the first pitch - a mere 10 metres. Once onto the pitch, I realised that I had already done most of the crawling I would do that day. At the bottom of the pitch, Derek pulled down the doubled rope, and we were dependant on Phil's memory (which had proved faulty once already that day) to find our way through to the lower entrance (MC 1). Jim had already rigged the lower entrance.



Mark Hunter (left) is dwarfed by the Khan (right) and the Begum (centre) Photo Phil Cole.





Aragonite and Straws in the Dungeon,  
Kubla Khan Photo Pat Larkin.

Below the first pitch, there are another two pitches of 15 and 20 metres respectively. It became immediately obvious that Kubla Khan is a very large cave. At the bottom of the third pitch, three passages head off in different directions to confuse the uninitiated. After a short discussion, we chose the correct passage and entered Opium Den.

Opium Den contains aragonite displays of the same quality as Genghis Khan - fewer, not as richly coloured, but larger still. The aragonite in Opium Den is predominately white and grey, with clusters ranging up to 50 and 60 centimetres long and half that width. Rapidly, the aragonite in Sigma Cave began to look very ordinary.

Beyond Opium Den, we followed a sparse trail of reflective discs punctuated by the odd cleaning station - (each consisting of a bucket of water and a scrubbing brush to clean the mud off each traveller's shoes) through a passage called Forbidden City. Next, we were confronted by the Khan's army - a row of stalagmites leading down into Xanadu, the largest chamber in the cave.

If you were to hurry through this magnificent cave, it is likely that many of the fine, small scale decorations would be missed. High to the right of Forbidden City, at the top of a sloping wall of flowstone, is the Jade Pool. The Jade Pool is a perched pool of blue green water, three metres long, two metres wide, surrounded by white flowstone, covered with Calcite rafts, overhung by straws. The small scale decoration in Kubla Khan has also grown beyond proportion.

Below the Khan's army, we entered a truly enormous chamber. Xanadu is, at a guess, one hundred and fifty metres long, forty metres wide and sixty metres high. Car-sized boulders are strewn about the floor. At one end stands Australia's largest stalagmite: the Khan. The Khan is a golden colour. Its large sparkling crystal faces reveal that it is no longer active. It stands over 17 metres high, and is some 4 metres wide at the base.

Yet the Khan is not the largest speleothem in Australia: the discoverers of the Khan did not notice a flowstone canopy twice as high as the Khan and some five metres wide until after their photographs were developed. This monstrous canopy is called the Begum and it dominates one wall of Xanadu.

There are a number of highly decorated small passages in the Xanadu region, and one, called the Dungeon, contains the finest and most delicate aragonite and straw displays in the cave. The Dungeon is exceedingly delicate, with limited room to move, and parties should take great care if they visit it.

The exit from Xanadu is a large descending passage which is choked with boulders in places, called Sallys Folly. Route finding through Sallys Folly was not as difficult as reputation would have had me believe. The passage continued for about one hundred metres past a deep pool, and diminished in size until we had to bend over and even crawl a bit! It ended in a short climb which popped out into the side of another large chamber, Cairn Hall. Some 25 metres below me gurgled the Kubla Khan River.

The River sumps just downstream of the point where our double-roped abseil landed us. In 1983, TCC members Nick Hume, Stefan and Rolan Eberhard dived the one kilometre of water filled passage between Cairn Hall and the resurgence.

As we sat beside the river munching on chocolate bars, Jim interrupted the gurgling noise:

"Ah, Derek, are you a lawyer too?"

"No!"

"Phew! I thought for a moment that I was the only normal bloke on this trip."

We followed the river upstream and climbed high to the right at the end of Cairn Hall into the Pleasure Dome. I had seen photos of Pleasure Dome on many occasions, but it is altogether another thing, to stand in this magnificent 40 x 60 metre chamber, floor littered with golden rim pools each about a metre deep. I was proud and pleased to see first hand that cavers had taken such care to wash and remove muddy shoes and overalls to preserve Pleasure Dome in an almost untarnished state. Here, surely, is proof that responsible, conservation-conscious caving works.

The bottom entrance (MC 1) lies about two hundred metres up the riverway from Cairn Hall, and to avoid swimming in the 5 degrees water, we chose to do the "Stalagmite shuffle" - a series of climbs and traverses, most of which are quite straight forward. Nevertheless, there are one or two tricky bits with nasty falls to the river below, so the party took some time to "shuffle" along. Eventually we decided to face the "plunge pools" of the riverway - perhaps the need for food overcame our desires to stay dry and warm. We had climbed far enough to avoid all but one plunge pool, so we only got into waist deep water, and only briefly. Beyond the plunge pools is a large collapse which has formed the lower entrance. The final prusik out may well be the grottiest prusik at Mole Creek.

We emerged into a starry -2 Degrees Celcius Tasmanian night. True, there was ice on the windscreen of our car when we got back to it, but there was food inside and the fresh memory of one of the best caving trips in the country.

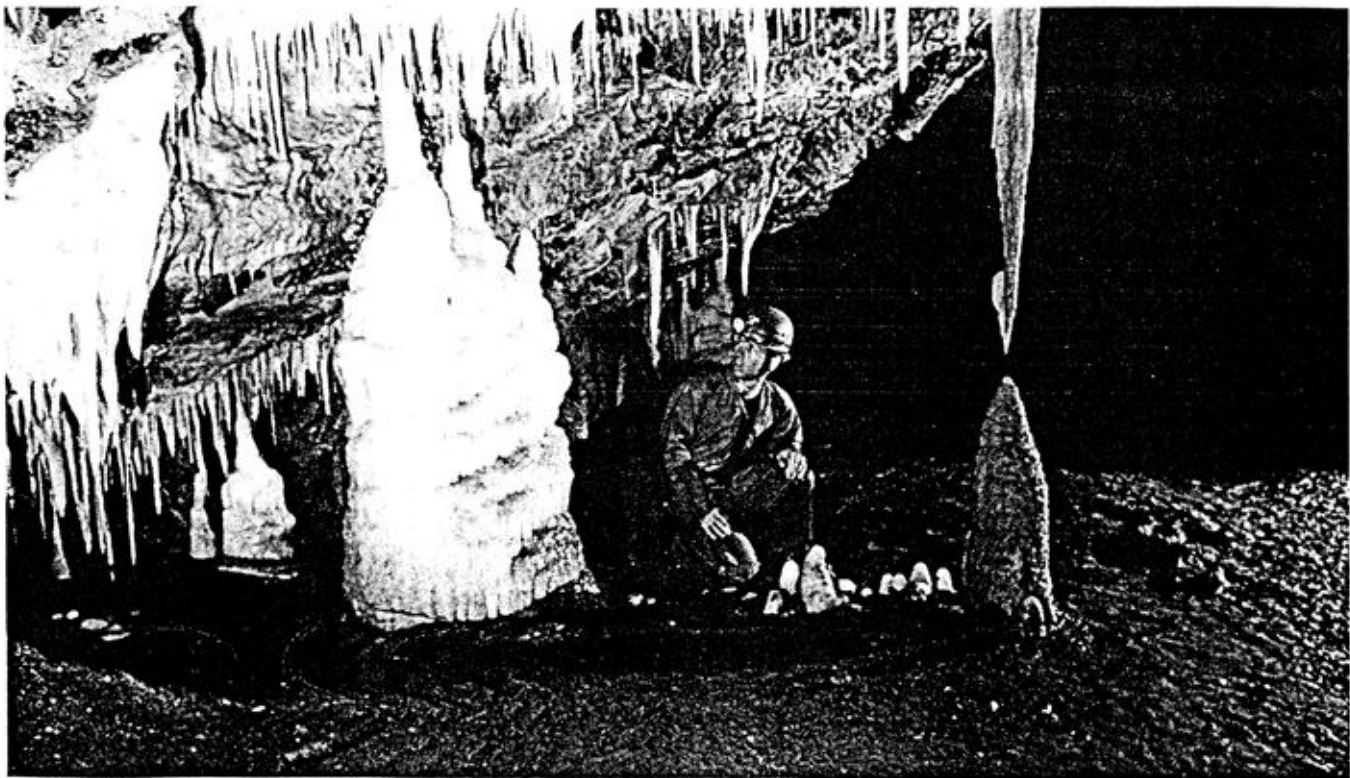
#### CROESUS CAVE (Sunday, 7 June)

Croesus Cave's lower entrance (MC13) lies within 100 metres of the Cradle Mountain road in typical Tasmanian rainforest. This entrance lies in a small limestone bluff barely 5 metres high. It is the resurgence for one of Australia's most beautiful underground riverways.

The entrance is quite low and is followed by a crawl through a pool. In this case, it is impossible to stay dry below the waist. Just 50 metres into the cave is the first waist deep pool overhung by a low roof, beyond which the main passage really begins.

The streamway consists of thousands of active rim dams. The dams are knee to waist high and pools of water fill the interstices between the dams. The rate of water flow over the dams along the streamway is quite small, but a substantial volume of water is trapped in the pools. Like most Mole Creek caves, Croesus is highly decorated - but the other speleothems are overshadowed by the rims in the stream bed. The stream passage has almost zero gradient, is some 5 to 15 metres high, 4 to 8 metres wide, 2 kilometres long and, as I have said, consists of active golden rims along its entire length.





Jim Blyd perched among Stals besides the streamway in Croesus Cave. Photo: Phil Cole.

About one kilometre into the cave, the stream takes an acute turn to the right. At this point I could see hundreds of metres downstream and upstream, with the river making a spectacular sweeping turn at my feet.

Several hundred metres further in, the character of the stream begins to change - the frequency and height of the rims diminishes and the gradient of the stream becomes perceptible. Almost two kilometres in, and Croesus presented us with a spectacular display of inactive golden rim pools, which rise 20 metres to the right of the stream. The "Golden Stairway" rivals Pleasure Dome.

A short distance further on, up a few climbs, through grotty passage lies the upper entrance (MC43). But it is far more pleasurable, and just as quick, to avoid the mud and savour the return stroll along Croesus' Magnificent streamway back to the lower entrance.

#### HERBETS POT

Herbets Pot (MC 202) was to have been the highlight of our trip - none of us had done it before. It was billed as a remarkable, sporty cave - Mole Creek decoration with a spectacular streamway larger than any in Australia, saved only for Growling Swallet. It is an 8 kilometre system entered via a rapidly descending tributary stream which leads through tight passage to the "main drain" - the underground appearance of Mole Creek itself upstream of Wet Cave (MC 144). At this point there is a choice - "upstream Herbets" or "downstream Herbets". Both trips are said to be gems.

I said "was to have been" the highlight of our trip, but alas! It wasn't. We didn't find it in time.

Herbets Pot is on private property - so we knocked on the farmhouse door and asked for permission to do the cave. The landowner/farmer was very helpful, allowed us onto his property, gave us directions, asked us to let him know when we were leaving and stressed the importance of shutting gates behind us to prevent the escape of his stock. (It is essential that visiting cavers comply with these simple requests. It is not only courteous, it is important from the point of view of future access. See the SUSS and ASF Codes of Ethics regarding caves on private land.)

We searched over hill and dale and found a stream sinking in a doline that appeared to fit the description. But there was no obvious way in. Apparently, we found Kelly Pot (MC 207), although the identity of the sink we found must be in doubt. Hours later, too late to do the cave, we found the entrance to Herbets Pot (see map).

It was an eventful trip. We enjoyed the company of the Sydney Swanettes on the flight to Melbourne. We had a delicious counter dinner in a Launceston pub on Friday night. Saturday provided our adventure with the keys to Kubla and Genghis. (Many thanks to the Tasmanian NPWS Ranger who drove and walked up to Kubla with a spare key for us!) Sunday saw us search in vein for Herbets Pot. On Monday, on the way to find Lynds Cave (MC14), Mark Hunter (displaying all the driving skills of Mike Lake and Guy McKenna) ran our hired Commodore off the Cradle Mountain Road on a bend and dented the front passenger side panel. Each of us shouted Derek a round of beers for ticking the insurance box on the hire application form. We flew back to Sydney on early Monday afternoon.

And what did this little splurge cost me? My apex airfare was \$210, food cost \$30, the hire car was \$40, and I spent \$30 on film. That's \$310. Great value for a few days of laid back caving in an area unparalleled elsewhere in Australia. Many thanks to Phil for the inspirational idea.

I will certainly be going back, maybe next Easter. If anyone is interested, don't hesitate to come forward. And next time, not even Mother's driving will stop us from getting into Herbets Pot!

Pat Larkin.

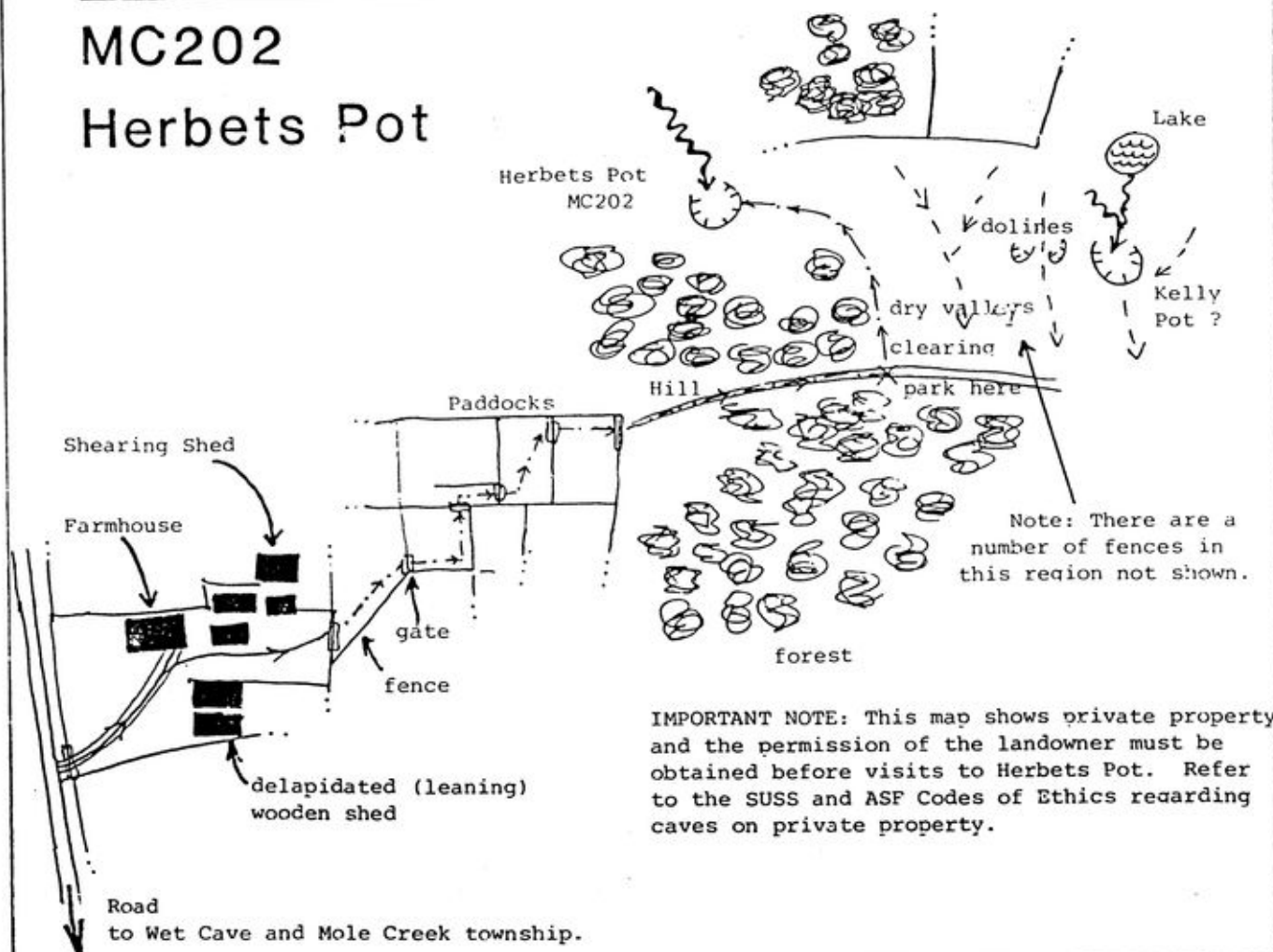


Jim Blyd admiring some of the enormous Aragonite Clusters in Opium Den. Kubla Khan. Photo Phil Cole.

# LOCATION MAP

## MC202

### Herbets Pot



NOT TO SCALE.

Drawn 7/6/87  
Draft 20/10/87

P.W. Larkin



### Notes on the Kubla Khan Maps.

It is a searing indictment of Australian Speleology, that a high grade map of Kubla Khan has never been published. As far as I am aware, in no other major developed caving country in the world has there been such an omission.

The attached maps are just grade 1 sketches. I have based the maps on Bunton & Eberhard (1984)\*, which contains a number of glaring errors and over simplifications. I have made major changes from the previous map, particularly above Opium Den, at Sallus Folly, at the formation climb above the down stream sump and at the lower entrance. Secondly I have included a number of extra features in the map (eg. The Dungeon, the Jade Pool). Thirdly, I have included the types of terrain encountered in Kubla - boulders, major speleothems, flowstone, mud floor, rim pools etc. Finally I have corrected the pitch lengths.

\* Bunton S and Eberhard R, VERTICAL CAVES OF TASMANIA, Adventure Presentations, 1984, pp72-73

MC1, MC29

Kubla Khan

Mole Creek, Tas.

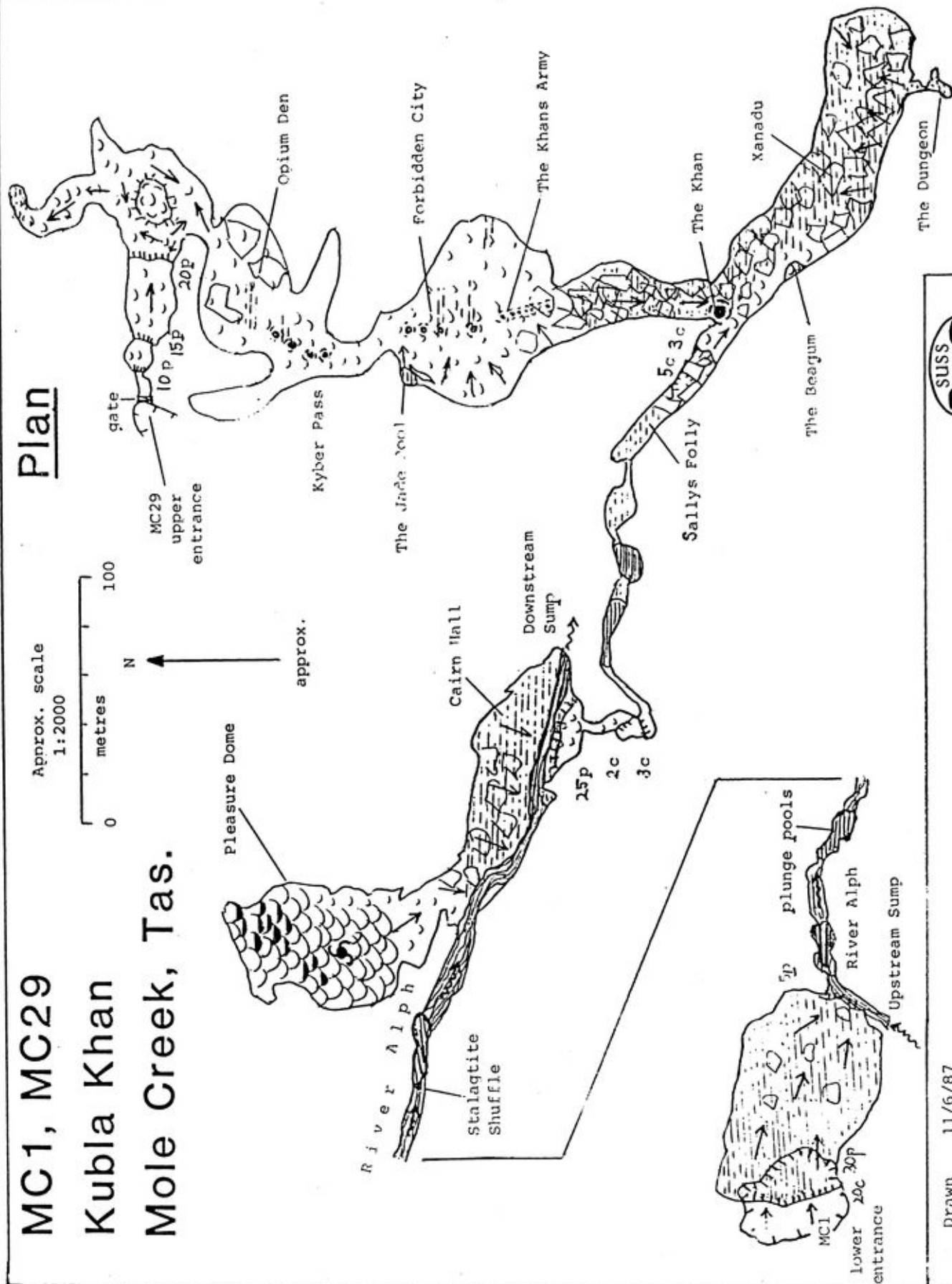
Plan

Approx. scale  
1:2000

metres  
0 100

N

approx.



ASF 1

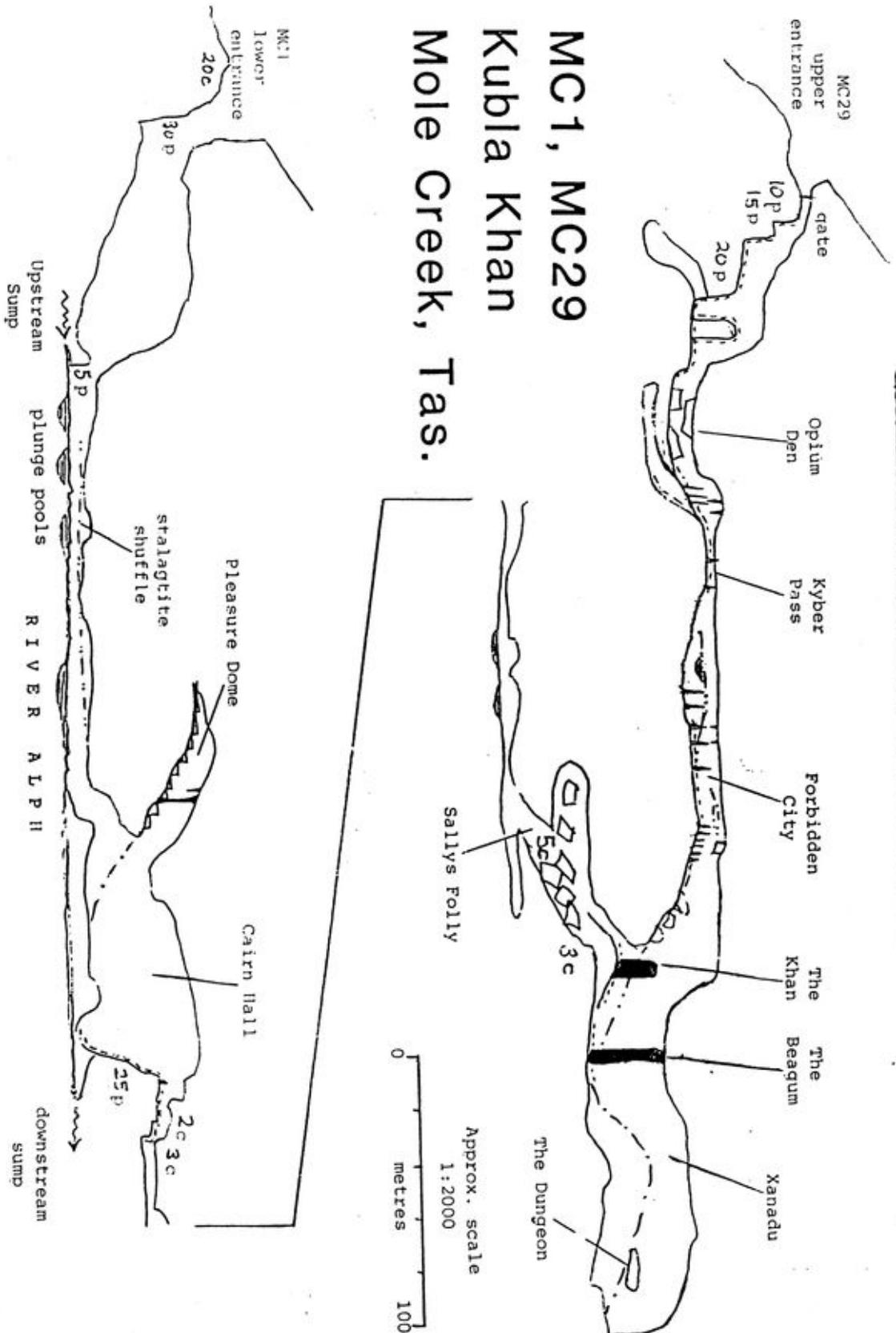
P.W. Larkin

Refer to attached notes

Drawn 11/6/87  
Draft 25/10/87

# Developed Longitudinal Section

MC1, MC29  
Kubla Khan  
Mole Creek, Tas.



Drawn 11/6/87  
Draft 25/10/87

Refer to attached Notes

P.W. Larkin

ASFI





## HEARSAY

"Sex and Caving have a lot in common, cavers are constantly desiring small dark places within the firm body of mother earth. After much scheming and planning late into the night, the actual caving experience consists of exhausting periods of groping around in the dark, much grunting and groaning, followed by short bursts of rapture and enthusiastic describing of satisfaction to others afterwards. This is not to suggest cavers are a bunch of deviates, but .... well, perhaps they are just a little strange."

- Nature & Health Vol 8. No 2. Winter 1987.

"This is the lake in Antarctica which I named after my children - though I solidly disagree with naming things after people you know..."

- Andy Spate.

(Enter Simon wearing wetsuit, caving lights and SCUBA gear)

SIMON: "It's easy! Just dont tell him we're going diving."

KEIR: "I think he's going to suspect..."

"according to Mr Bryan there were cave depressions called dough lines ..."

- THE OBERON REVIEW 19/09/87.

Allen, Allen & Hemsley note:

"Attention Mr. Larkin

Queer Vaughan-Taylor called.  
please call."

DEFINITION: OXANGLIE - (noun) a word that annoys Mike Lake so much , its worth publishing twice.

"I'd like to eliminate all whooly thinking in the world. I'll genetcly engineer a virus that destroys the emotion centres of the brain, turning everyone into analytical, logical thinkers... like me..."

- Mike Lake.



Cartoon: Mike Lake - the mad physicist who actually does the things that John August can only dream of. By Kevin Moore.

# The Jenolan Monorail Proposal

Darling Harbour, Ayres Rock, .... the acceleration of monorail construction in recent times has only been surpassed by the growth in Stock Broker bankruptcies. So, where do you think the next monorail will spring up? This is a little peek into a frightening future based on an unfavourable Jenolan Caves Plan of Management.....

1 April 1990

The Honourable,  
The Minister for Darling Harbour and other Monuments,  
Parliament House,  
Macquarie Street,  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Sir,

## 1.0 THE JENOLAN CAVES MONORAIL: A PROPOSAL

It gives me a great deal of pleasure to forward our submission for a Jenolan Caves monorail to service the people of New South Wales.

The 1988 Jenolan Caves Plan of Management recommended the establishment of a rapid transport "people mover" from the top of the five mile hill to the Jenolan Caves Resort Centre. The Plan recognised the need for increased transport capacity to facilitate expansion of the Resort Centre and increase government revenue, always in a manner consistent with the preservation of the environment. We believe the monorail proposal will satisfy these stringent requirements.

## 2.0 THE COMPANY

Our company, Central Queensland Cement Pty. Limited, has over thirty years of experience in karst management and engineering. Among our personnel are experts in endangered karst wildlife species, exotic weed management and structural cave rearrangement. Even the most outspoken opponents of this Jenolan Plan, the Australian Speleological Federation, has described our company's record as "unparalleled in Australia".

## 3.0 THE MONORAIL PROPOSAL

### 3.1 Route

The Company has considered a number of route options in the light of engineering requirements, carrying capacity, revenue potential and environmental implications. The proposed route is recommended for its particularly high rating in the majority of these categories.

It is proposed to construct a multiple level car park and visitor complex at the top of the Five Mile Hill on the present site of the Binda Bush Cabins. The first monorail station will be located inside this complex.

The monorail line will be elevated, on average five metres above ground

level. The route will proceed generally to the east of the present roadway to provide the best views for monorail patrons. The monorail stilts will be painted green to minimise the visual impact of the line.

Approximately 400 short access trails will be constructed from the present roadway to enable drilling and placing the monorail stilts. The construction will lead to transient and local impacts on vegetation. However the vegetation will regenerate rapidly after the Company's proposed tree planting programme. We'll plant two trees for each one we cut down.

At the foot of the Five Mile Hill, it is proposed that the monorail will pass over Blue Lake on taller stilts and enter the Lucas cave via the Balcony entrance. This route has been chosen (especially in the light of comments from environmental pressure groups) to minimise the impacts of the system on the grand arch.

Whilst the precise route details are not yet finalised, it is envisaged the monorail will wind its way through the Lucas, Cerbrus, River, Orient and Temple of Baal systems before exiting via the Binoomea Cut. The monorail will stop for short intervals near important cave features where a recorded message will be activated. This will save thousands of dollars in the salaries of guiding staff. It is proposed to shed guiding staff by offering redundancy packages and by natural attrition.

The Company refutes the claim that the monorail will adversely impact on the cave system. Special care will be taken to align the monorail line and tunnels to preserve the outstanding features such as the Broken Column, the Grand Column and the Angels Wing. All tunnelling will be supervised by an independent Sydney caving consultant (seconded from the Macquarie University Caving Group) who has had many years of experience tunnelling into the B4-5 extension at Bungonia.

Moreover, detractors have ignored the fact that the monorail will lessen the continuing impacts of visitors on the caves. Since the monorail carriages will be fully enclosed, lint build-up in the caves from visitors will be substantially eliminated.

From the Binoomea Cut, it is proposed the monorail line will pass over the existing roadways to an elevated monorail station to be constructed over the main entrance to Caves House. It was originally proposed to make minor structural alterations to Caves House to incorporate a monorail station, however, this proposal received a lukewarm response from the National Trust. After careful analysis, the Company considers that the adjusted proposal, which does not physically impact on Caves House, is in keeping with the heritage values of the area.

The route of the proposed monorail follows the existing roadway from the Caves House Station to the Number Two car park from where it will enter the Carlotta Arch and the Nettle/Arch cave system. The monorail line through the Devils Coachhouse will have considerably less impact than the bridge and elevator system proposed some years ago.

The Company rejects the suggestion that the monorail's impacts on the Devils Coachhouse are environmentally unacceptable. The Company believes that the public is entitled to see wilderness areas such as the Devils Coachhouse. It is suggested that the route through the Coachhouse coupled

with the preservation of the Grand Arch is an appropriate balance between development and conservation.

Next, the monorail will enter the Imperial and Jubilee Cave systems via a new series of tunnels. The entry tunnel will connect the Coachhouse with the presently undeveloped Imperial Cave streamway. The monorail will exit on the side of the hill near Rho Hole. It will complete its loop, returning passengers to the complex on the five mile hill via an elevated line above the historic route of the six foot track.

### 3.2 Environmental Impact Assessment.

The proposed monorail has been subjected to a rigorous environmental impact assessment both by the Company's own environmental consultants and by the officers of the Public Works Department.

It is established that monorails are the most environmentally outstanding transport systems. There is no doubt that the people of New South Wales deserve a monorail for Jenolan Caves.

### 3.3 Administrative arrangements.

The Company's economic advisers have pointed out the advantages to both the Company and the government of discouraging the use of the roadway in favour of the monorail. The Company suggests placing a substantial toll on the road. The toll should be equal to or greater than the cost of the monorail ticket. As the Minister is no doubt aware, there are precedents for such systems elsewhere in the world, and in the Kosiosko National Park.

It is proposed to name the new monorail the "Speleotube".

For some years, the Minister's Government has recognised the deficiencies in the usual system of development control in New South Wales. Projects of the importance of the Speleotube should be spared the attentions of professional environmental agitators. The legitimate concerns of environmentalists have been taken into account and the monorail system has been adapted appropriately. Accordingly, our solicitors have prepared a draft Speleotube Development Act, the provisions of which have been largely adapted from other similar New South Wales legislation.

### 4.0 Recommendation.

The Jenolan Caves monorail or "Speleotube" has undergone the most rigorous analysis and environmental assessments. The Company's record, and the proposal, speak for themselves.

Yours faithfully,

Sparrow City,  
Managing Director.

# Official Stuff

(Society Notices)

## SUSS MEETINGS

THERE WILL BE NO SUSS MEETING IN JANUARY 1988. There will be one meeting in February. From March onwards, there will be two meetings per month as usual. SUSS meetings are held on the first Thursday and third Wednesday of each month, at 7:30 pm, in the Common Room of the Holme Building. Enter from the front of the Footbridge Theatre.

- Thur 4 Feb CHRISTMAS ISLAND EXPEDITION: Derek Hobbs and Guy Cox will show slides and speak about Rauleigh Webb's Christmas Island expedition. The expedition was highly successful and discovered a great deal of new cave, including a 500 metre long chamber.
- Thur 3 Mar 3-D Slides of CHEVALIAR EXTENSION and BARRALONG CAVE at Jenolan will be among the highlights of Robert Brand's presentation of his 3-D photography. Robert's presentation last year received rave reviews, so don't miss this one.
- Wed 17 Mar CHILCHOTLA '88, MEXICO: Phil Cole will fill us in on some of the results of Al Warild's third expedition to Mexico. Will Phil be announcing the discovery of new one kilometre deep caves? Come along and find out!
- Thur 7 Apr To be announced.
- Wed 20 Apr ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - see notices below.

## INCORPORATION

As noted in the last Annual Report of the Committee, the incorporation of the Society has been investigated. There are a number of advantages with incorporation, and the Committee has resolved to proceed towards incorporation. Over the next few months, I will be drafting a new constitution to comply with the provisions of the Associations Incorporation Act 1984 and the requirements of the NSW Corporate Affairs Commission. I intend to adapt the provisions of the present constitution as far as practicable.

If there are any members who wish to be consulted during the drafting stage, please contact me. The Committee will review the draft in February, after which it will be circulated to all voting members in a form incorporating the Committee's amendments. At all stages during the preparation of the draft, the Corporate Affairs Commission will be consulted.

Pat Larkin.

## NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Take notice that the 40th Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held on Wednesday, 20 April 1988, at 7:30pm in the Common Room of the Holme Building at the University of Sydney.



### NOTICES OF MOTION

Take notice that at the meeting of Wednesday 20 April 1988, we will move the following:

1. "That the Secretary be empowered to affect the incorporation of SUSS pursuant to the provisions of the Associations Incorporation Act 1984."

2. "That the Constitution be repealed and the new Constitution (as recommended by the Committee) be adopted."

If the motions succeed, the 40th AGM will be held in accordance with the new Constitution.

Greg Wilkins  
Mark Staraj

### COMMITTEE CHANGES

Since the last AGM, some Committee members have gone overseas on trips and have stood aside or stood down. Accordingly, the following is an updated Committee list:

Acting President and Vice President:	Mark Staraj	799.9438 - H
Secretary	Pat Larkin	699.6892 - H, till Jan. or 684.1714 - parents or 229.8765 - W.
Treasurer	Chris Young	949.7973 - H
ASF Councillor	Ellie McFayden	818.1846 -H; 217.0268 -W
Equipment Officer	Mark Pollinger	519.6046 - H
Safety Officer	Rob Crowe	969.1362 - H
Minutes Secretary	Louise Devine	953.7622 - H
Co-ordinating Editor	Greg Wilkins	807.0024 -W; 810.4592 -H
Librarian	Martin Scott	449.4092 - H
General Committee: (Publicity)	Simon McCartney	809.5045 - W
(Social)	Mike Gibian	660.2685 -H; 264.2685 -W

The following Committee members will be away until February 1988 -

President	Keir Vaughan Taylor	519.9769 -H; 692.3516 -W
Gen. Committee	Danielle Gemenis	33.3295 - H

# Stop Press

## Mt ETNA ERUPTS!

On Saturday 12 December 1987, a three page article entitled "Rumbles on Mt Etna" appeared in the Good Weekend, the Sydney Morning Herald magazine, accompanied by colour photos of the mining, the caves and the blast damage. Over the past few weeks, the company has received a great deal of negative publicity, particularly in Queensland where the story has, on a number of days, led the Fitzgerald Inquiry as the top story on the evening news.

On the weekend, the Mt Etna issue exploded. The company moved its drill rig to a point about 100 metres from Bat Cleft, and drilled an array of holes for blasting. The Company claimed the proposed blasting would be for "road maintainence". It is difficult to see how the blasting on a vertical rock face some distance above the road is "road maintainence". Be that as it may, the practical effect of the blasting would be to destroy the Bat Cleft access track, and the works threatened by the Company effectively amounts to cutting a new bench up the Mountain. If such works were carried out, the caves Speaking Tube, Elephant Hole (both important Ghost Bat caves), Carn Dum and Joes Rocky Cavern would be destroyed.

## Bat cave protectors sabotage blasting

By BOB BEALE,  
Science Reporter

Conservationists have sabotaged a cement company's plan to set off explosives near an important bat-breeding cave at the controversial Mt Etna limestone quarry near Rockhampton.

At the weekend, protesters clandestinely visited the quarry and used Central Queensland Cement's own product to fill holes drilled in a rock face.

The protesters said the grid-patterned holes were to be used in blasting away part of the rock face to allow foot access to the cave, which is becoming more popular with wildlife observers.

Known as Bat Cleft, the cave is thought to be the main Australian breeding site for the little bent-winged bat. Conservationists say more than four-fifths of the species here depend on Bat Cleft as a maternity site.

An estimated 100,000 female bats assemble there to give birth between November and February each year, taking advantage of the

warm and humid air trapped by the cave's unusual shape.

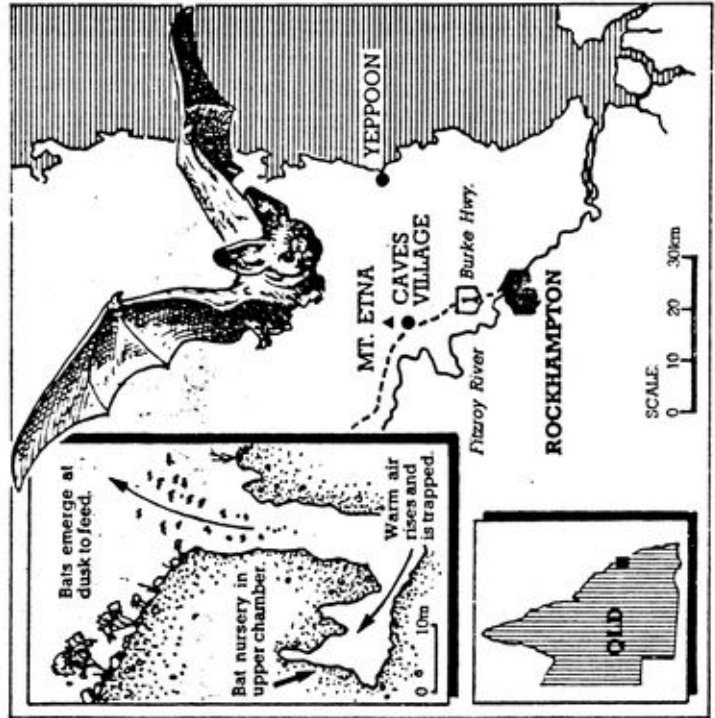
Despite the company's denials that quarrying would endanger Bat Cleft, the conservationists claim to have evidence that blasting so close would do so.

A spokesman in Rockhampton for the Central Queensland Speleological Society, Mr Craig Hardy, said a National Parks and Wildlife Service study showed many young bats died when the company blasted within 300 metres of Bat Cleft in 1969.

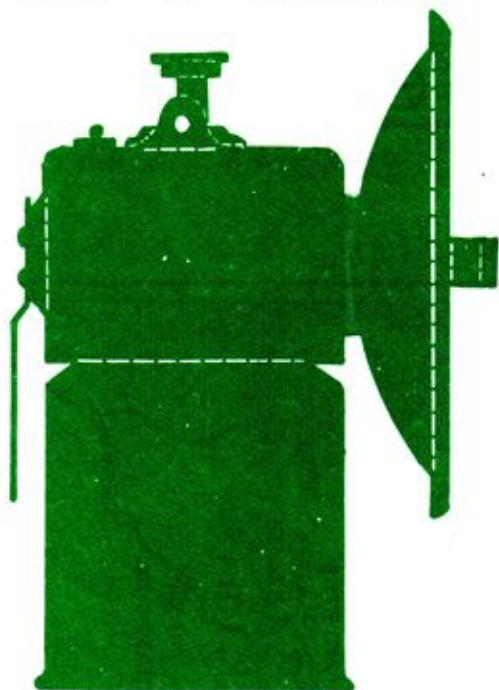
He said the company claimed the new drill holes were 600 metres from the cave entrance and part of a road maintenance program.

But the conservationists said they found the drill holes only 150 metres from the cave and 40 metres from a road, and set above the road on a rock face.

Cavers and conservationists have fought a long-running battle against quarrying and are campaigning nationally to have Mt Etna included in a national park.



Lumen in Tenebris



# SUSS

BULLETIN  
of the  
SYDNEY UNIVERSITY  
SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

BOX 35, HOLME BUILDING,  
UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY,  
N.S.W. 2006

## Future Trips

<u>When?</u>	<u>Where?</u>	<u>For information, phone:</u>
Mon 14 Dec - Wed 16 Dec	Tuglow	Greg Wilkins 810.4592 - H; 807.0024 - W.
Sun 27 Dec - Sat 2 Jan	Jenolan	Pat Larkin 229.8765 - W; or 699.6892 - H 'till Jan.
January	Mt Etna, Qld.	Pat Larkin.

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The Committee of SUSS wishes you all a very merry Christmas!!